

## Chapter 4 *Nutrition Education*

### Module 6: The M-and-M's of Healthy Eating Choices

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#### Step Up and Step Out to market and model healthy eating choices!

*"Life is what we make it,  
always has been,  
always will be."*

... Grandma Moses

It starts with you...and "IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU!™" (1) Don't underestimate the value of your actions!

It is easy to avoid falling in the "Diet Police" trap, when you model healthy choices. Jimmy Stewart's character in the classic holiday movie "*It's a Wonderful Life*" shows us just how much of an effect we can have on other people's lives...even with small actions!

#### Market through awareness

Create awareness of healthy eating with fun events!

##### Example:



##### **Raffle Fruit and Vegetable Quilt**

The efforts of one very creative community member led to a unique event that created awareness, *and* raised money for coalition activities! Mrs. M created a fruit and vegetable quilt pattern. The children in her granddaughter's grade school class, painted fruits and vegetables on fabric squares, and then Mrs. M quilted them. The quilt was the topic of much discussion while on display, and so many people wanted it that the decision was made to hold a raffle! It was an event that was fun, and a source of pride for many people!

## Market with education

Market healthy eating by teaching skills for making healthy choices. It is sometimes assumed that people already have knowledge about how to make healthy choices and prepare foods when they don't!



### **Example 1: Fat Bucks Buffet (2)**

A **Fat Bucks Buffet** is a fun way to introduce the concepts involved in controlling fat intake by making educated food choices. Groups and communities have held Breakfast Buffets, Lunch Buffets, "Dessert" Buffets, and Mexican Food Buffets among others. Participants use "fat bucks" to purchase their food for a meal or snack based on the fat content of the items offered. Participants make choices among high fat, low-fat, and medium fat foods. There are no bad foods, only bad diets!

### **Example 2: Breakfast Campaign (3)**

Breakfast is an important part of the day! Studies show improved grades when children eat breakfast. The American Dietetic Association and its Foundation has produced a breakfast campaign as a part of their Child Nutrition and Health Campaign. The campaign has some great ideas to market awareness and choices.

## Market by promoting resources

Promote resources that are available within and outside of the community to increase opportunities for healthy eating choices. Provide information on where to go and how to take advantage of resources.

### **Examples:**



Does your County Extension Office offer healthy cooking classes? Does the local hospital wellness program teach classes on stress reduction? Is the local dietetics association offering supermarket tours? Make it a coalition goal to find out about community programs and help to make them a success with M-and-M's! Can you help increase awareness and attendance at the summer farm and art market? In doing so, you may also increase opportunities for community networking!

## Model healthy eating choices

This is the real heart of “It’s All About You™”(1) There are *many* small opportunities you can personally choose to make a difference in your community. Use the following tips to set personal goals and make it easier to develop a lifetime of healthy habits!

“It’s All About You™” provides tips for making personal changes:



- ♥ **Be Realistic**  
Make small changes over time in what you eat...After all, small steps work better than giant leaps
- ♥ **Be Adventurous**  
Expand your tastes to enjoy a variety of food
- ♥ **Be Flexible**  
Go ahead and balance what you eat...No need to worry about just one meal or one day
- ♥ **Be Sensible**  
Enjoy all foods, just don’t overdo it
- ♥ **Be Active**  
Walk the dog, don’t just watch the dog walk

Other tips:

- ♥ Remember all foods fit...don’t eliminate foods...eat in smaller quantities or less often
- ♥ Find support for making changes
- ♥ Find alternatives for stress reduction other than food
- ♥ Make appropriate foods available, e.g., easy to eat
- ♥ Learn more about how to make healthy food choices



Examples of ways to model healthy choices:



### Example 1: During Holidays

Provide healthy choices for holidays. There is no better time to model healthy eating choices than when all the “family” is gathered for holidays. A family walk after a meal (that includes healthy eating choices), is also a way to model *balance* with physical activity!

**Example 2: At Potlucks**

How many times have you gone to a large gathering and taken a healthy food dish? If you haven't, try it...you'll find fresh fruits and vegetables disappear quickly!

**Example 3: At Parties**

It's not necessary to take the chips and dip off the party list, but include some healthy choices...maybe baked chips with lower fat dip? It is hard to tell the difference, if it is done right. If you opt for the regular chips and dip? That's okay too, just provide other healthy options to create the opportunity for balance!

**Example 4: At Work**

Again, there aren't bad foods, just bad diets! If there aren't healthy choices in the break room for "celebrations" or in the vending machine, be the one who brings in some healthy choices, or request different choices for the vending machines.

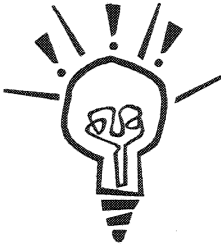
**Example 5: When Eating Out**

Make healthy choices when eating out. Take a lead in requesting healthy choices such as salad dressing on the side or small-sized portions.



## References and Resources

- (1) The American Dietetic Association's "IT'S ALL ABOUT YOU" CAMPAIGN™(©1996 Dietary Guidelines Alliance). For information contact: the American Dietetic Association, National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics, 216 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-6995 1-800-745-0775 website: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)
- (2) Fat Bucks Buffet. For information contact the Kansas Department of Health and Environment, Bureau of Health Promotion, 900 S.W. Jackson, Room 901 N, Topeka, Kansas 66612, (785) 296-8126.
- (3) The American Dietetic Association. *Child Nutrition and Health Campaign: Eat Breakfast...Get Moving for the Fun of it...Be a Role Model*. For information contact: the American Dietetic Association, National Center for Nutrition and Dietetics, 216 W. Jackson Blvd., Suite 800, Chicago, IL 60606-6995 1-800-745-0775 website: [www.eatright.org/child/](http://www.eatright.org/child/)



### **Module Tip:**

Modeling healthy choices starts with one person at a time...one small step at a time.

### **FAQs:**

- ❑ **Question:** It's okay to work on healthy choices for kids, but it's just too hard to make changes for myself. What can I do?  
**Answer:** Modeling good choices for our children are so important. It may be helpful for you to remember that all foods can fit as a part of a healthy diet—or in other words “diets” don’t work. Take small steps to alleviate that “diet mentality” and make it easier to create permanent habit changes.
- ❑ **Question:** What is the best way to find topics for newsletter or newspaper articles that would be of interest to people?  
**Answer:** Check the resources found in the appendix. The American Dietetic Association, among other reliable sources, has up-to-date information of interest on their web site.

### **Module Glossary:**

**Role Model:** An individual sets a good example by “doing”.



## Check Your Healthy Eating Goals

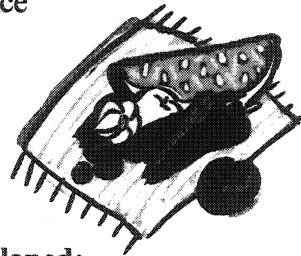
How well are you doing with the goals you set when completing your personal review? Use the following healthy eating actions to check your progress.

Feel encouraged with even small progress towards these goals. In doing so you become a role model for healthy eating.

- ☐ The Food Guide Pyramid is understood and followed
- ☐ Meals are planned for good balance
- ☐ There is good balance when eating out
- ☐ Healthy choices are made easily available
- ☐ Fruits and veggies are on hand at home
- ☐ Breakfast is eaten
- ☐ There is adequate time for eating
- ☐ Factors that create less healthy choices are identified

### Families:

- ☐ Meals are eaten together—without distractions like TV
- ☐ All family members help plan healthy meals
- ☐ Healthy snacks are carried in the car during trips and other times when appropriate
- ☐ Healthy snacks are available at home
- ☐ Parents are modeling healthy choices and balance



### Place a check by skills that may need to be developed:

- ☐ Basic nutrition understanding
- ☐ Menu planning
- ☐ Eating out
- ☐ Cooking
- ☐ Shopping
- ☐ Other

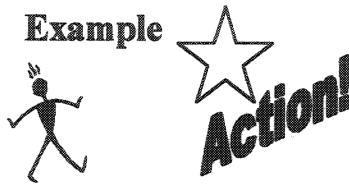


## Environmental Change Plan

**Objective:** Involve parents in healthy eating and physical activities at no less than 3 events during the 2005-2006 school year.

Environmental change methods planned. Check all that apply.	Actions and resources needed to implement the plan	Problems to resolve	Who takes action, and by what date?	Review— results of actions Check all that apply.
<input type="checkbox"/> Policy <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Repetition <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Support <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reward  -or-  Problems resolved:	<b>Action:</b> <i>Create a display with activities at Parent-Teacher Open House in September</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Parent newsletter</i>  <b>Resources:</b> <i>To be determined</i>		<i>Terry forms committee by July 15</i>	<b>Communication:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great marketing <input type="checkbox"/> Need M-and-M's <b>Time:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good timing <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Location:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Resources:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Feasible cost <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Participation:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Good <input type="checkbox"/> Needs work <b>Overall:</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Great-continue <input type="checkbox"/> Good-revise <input type="checkbox"/> Fair-revise
	<b>Action:</b> <i>Develop materials and prizes for activities</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Parent newsletter</i>  <b>Resources:</b> <i>To be determined</i>	<i>Funding for prizes</i>	<i>Mary coordinates activity needs by Aug 5</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communication <input type="checkbox"/> Time <input type="checkbox"/> Location <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of equipment <input type="checkbox"/> Other	<b>Action:</b> <i>Plan facility/space needs</i>  <b>Marketing Plan:</b> <i>Discussion with administration</i>  <b>Resources:</b> <i>To be determined</i>	<i>Permission &amp; scheduling with administration</i>	<i>Laura coordinates needs by Aug 5</i>	

**Comments:**



## Event Planning Tool

**Use this example to create awareness and participation!**

**Title Of Program/Project/Event:** Decorate a Display for Parent's Open House or a Health Fair

☐ Media ☒ School ☐ Business ☐ Community

**Target Audience:** (check all planned for your activity)

☒ Students 650 ☒ Parents 1200 ☒ Teachers 55 ☐ School meal director and staff \_\_\_\_  
☒ School administrators 3-5 ☒ Business/community leaders/community-at-large 10-15

**Outline/Description/Objectives/Ideas:**

**Objectives:**

- A. Students will learn about healthy choices while creating artwork.
- B. Open House/Health Fair participants will be aware of healthy food and activity choices.

**Description:**

- 1. Have each classroom create colorful pictures and tips for healthy food and activity.
- 2. Draw and/or use magazine pictures to decorate empty cardboard boxes to draw interest to displays set on tables or on the floor.
- 3. Put the student's tips on a poster and title it with the name of the classroom. For example: Mrs. Smith's 5<sup>th</sup> Grade Tips for Healthy Choices.
- 4. Set-up displays with the boxes. You may want to create two pyramids with the boxes—one for healthy eating and another for physical activity.
- 5. Include handouts of the student's tips and healthy recipes!

**Marketing:** Newspaper, radio, TV

**Resource Materials/Supplies/Food/Handouts:**

Art supplies, cardboard boxes (check with Food Service), health choice tips and recipes

**Costs/Funding Source:**

Printing costs and art supplies

**Manpower Needed:**

Art/classroom teachers, students

**Space/Time/Date Requirements:**

Varies

**Prep Time:**

Classroom time

**Alternate Plan:**

Plastic garbage bags to cover boxes if outside in the event of rain.

**Comments:**

Could include parent's survey to get comments about healthy eating and activity.  
The activity is also appropriate for a community health fair.